

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-10
LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 PA-01 /047 W
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R 171314Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1853
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY PARIS
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 5079

BRUSSELS FOR USEC-LABATT

PARIS FOR LABATT

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ELAB, PINT, TS
SUBJECT: DISSIDENT UNIONISTS OFFER TO TESTIFY IN ACHOUR
TRIAL

1. THREE UNIONISTS (MOHAMED BEN SAAD, MOHAMED LABIDI,
AND MOHAMED RAJHI) AROUND 1975 WERE FORCED OUT OF THE UGTT
BECAUSE OF POLICY DISPUTES WITH HABIB ACHOUR. THEY TRIED IN
LATE 1977 TO ESTABLISH A RIVAL LABOR STRUCTURE TO BE CALLED
THE TUNISIAN WORKERS' FORCE (FOT). THEY NOW HAVE WRITTEN
THE EXAMINING MAGISTRATE OFFERING TO TESTIFY IN THE DEFENSE
OF ACHOUR AND HIS ASSOCIATES IN THEIR UPCOMING TRIAL.

2. THE LETTER OF BEN SAAD, ERSTWHILE SECRETARY GENERAL
OF THE FOT, IS PARTICULARLY INTERESTING FOR THE SERIOUSNESS
OF ITS ALLEGATIONS AND ITS WEALTH OF DETAIL. IN IT,
BEN SAAD CHARGED THAT MOHAMED SAYAH, DIRECTOR OF THE RULING
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PARTY (PARTI SOCIALISTE DESTOURIAN - PSD) TRIED TO USE
THE NEW LABOR FRONT AS ONE WEAPON IN A CONCERTED CAMPAIGN
TO BRING DOWN THE UGTT LEHRTYWVP. BEN SAAD NAMED NAMES,

DATES, TYPES OF ASSISTANCE OFFERED AND RECEIVED, AND
STRATEGIES EMPLOYED. HE PURPOSELY LEFT SEVERAL QUESTIONS
VAGUE FOR LATER TESTIMONY.

3. THE OTHER LETTERS PROVIDE AMPLIFYING DATA. NOW IN TRANSLATION FROM THE ARABIC, WE WILL FORWARD ALL OF THESE DOCUMENTS TO ACTION ADDRESSES.

4. COMMENT: THE FOT LETTERS INTRODUCE A NEW AND COMPLICATING ELEMENT INTO THE GOT/UGTT AFFAIR. THEIR EXISTENCE HAS BEEN FRONT-PAGED IN DEMOCRATIE, THE NEW WEEKLY JOURNAL OF THE OPPOSITION MOVEMENT. AT THIS LATE STAGE, MOMENTUM TOWARD TRIAL SEEMS IRREVERSIBLE. BUT THE GOVERNMENT CANNOT RELISH THE PROSPECT OF BEN SAAD AND COMPANY'S ALLEGATIONS, WHICH DETAIL PARTY MACHINATIONS AND STRATEGY, BEING REAFTER TO THE OPEN COURT RECORD AS SWORN TESTIMONY. IF EVEN PARTIALLY CONFIRMED BY CORROBORATING TESTIMONY OR EVIDENCE, THESE CLAIMS COULD PROVE HIGHLY DAMAGING TO THE PROSECUTION CASE.
MULCAHY

NOTE BY OCT: # AS RECEIVED.

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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TAGS: ELAB, PINT, TS, (ACHOUR, HABIB)
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